

Minutes from a Meeting of the Concordia Council on Student Life

Held on September 26, 2008

SGW Campus H-769, 10am

PRESENT: Ms. Elizabeth Morey (Chair), Ms. Lauren Broad (Secretary), Ms. Anna Barrafato, Mr. Gerald Beasley, Dr. Donald Boisvert, Dr. Cathy Bolton, Mr. Jean Brisebois, Mr. Elie Chivi, Mr. Roger Côté, Ms. Johanne De Cubellis, Ms. Catherine Dicaire, Ms. Melanie Drew, Ms. Angela Ghadban, Ms. Priscila Gomes, Ms. Marlene Gross, Ms. Katherine Hedrich, Ms. Keyana Kashfi, Mr. Kurt Reckziegel, Mr. Jean-Philippe Savard, Ms. Katie Sheahan, Ms. Laura Stanbra, Ms. Brigitte St-Laurent, Ms. Lorraine Toscano

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Ms. Claudie Boujaklian, Ms. Daniela Caputo, Ms. Cathy Lin, Ms. Lina Lipscombe

ABSENT: Mr. Ahmed Ali Abumazwad, Ms. Rose Wangechi, Mr. Devin Wells

GUESTS: Ms. Charlene Lusikila, Ms. Louyse Lussier

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Chair called the meeting to order. Ms. Drew moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Sheahan seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first CCSL meeting and affirmed that the goal of the CCSL is to improve student life. The Council will work to find practical solutions for problems facing Concordia University students. The CCSL meetings will be a forum for dialogue and an opportunity to share information among faculty, staff and students.

3. INTRODUCTIONS

Members of the Council introduced themselves, giving a brief overview of their background & position in the University.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF MAY 2ND, 2008

Ms. Stanbra moved to approve the minutes and Mr. Côté seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

5.1 Policy on the Display of Posters

The Chair suggested that the policy on the display of posters be discussed under the heading of Student Life Issues. The Council agreed to come back to the issue later in the meeting.

5.2 Gender-Neutral Washrooms

The Chair asked Ms. Kashfi what the status was on the issue of gender-neutral washrooms. Ms. Kashfi stated that she was in continued discussion with the University regarding the issue. Ms. Kashfi confirmed that plans and renovations were underway, however she did not have any specific details as to the date of completion.

6. REPORTS AND ITEMS OF INFORMATION

6.1 Sub-Committees

The Chair referred the Council to the list of CCSL Sub-Committees that was prepared for them; it was noted that all sub-committees report back to the CCSL. The Chair continued by reading through the brief descriptions of each sub-committee.

CCSL Special Projects Committee

The Chair noted that the mandate for the CCSL Special Projects Committee would have to be revised to reflect the fact that the Committee would approve the level of funding to be awarded to student projects, rather than recommending the level of funding to the Dean of Students. Mr. Chivi informed the Council that there has been a demand for more strict guidelines for the Special Projects funding. The aim would be to provide clarity to students requesting funding and to aid the CCSL Special Projects Committee in allocating funds, obtaining required information, etc. The Council discussed the necessity of having more distinction between the names of the funds: the Special Projects Fund and the Student Initiated Projects Fund.

Ms. Kashfi motioned to revise the names of the fund thereby creating more distinction between them. Ms. Sheahan seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

A discussion ensued on the inadequacies of the current project documentation. The following issues were put forth by Mr. Chivi:

- Lack of clarity in criteria
- Lack of uniformity in applications received
- Difficulties arising with the composition of the selection committee

Mr. Chivi motioned to resolve that the guidelines and application for the Special Projects Fund and the Student Initiated Fund be updated. A vote was put before the council.

For: 12

Against: none

The motion passed unanimously.

CCSL Awards Committee

Ms. Barrafato reported to the Council that she felt the CCSL Awards Committee should establish more distinct guidelines for determining the winner of awards when they are reviewing candidates. The Chair suggested to Ms. Barrafato that the committee develop guidelines and submit them to the CCSL for approval.

Campus Wellness Committee/Healthy Campus Initiative

Ms. Lussier informed the Council that in the previous year, the committee did not receive any student representation. For this reason the committee did not meet last year. The Chair stated that if there is no interest in a particular committee, the CCSL must decide if the committee should continue to exist.

Housing and Job Bank Committee

Mr. Côté informed the Council that the CCSL continues to provide funding for the Housing and Job Bank Committee (HOJO) because it is an important service to provide. Over the years the level of funding has fluctuated and HOJO is responsible for controlling the funding. The CCSL wanted to see some accountability from HOJO, which is why they must provide the Council with semi-annual reports to justify where funding is spent. The final amount that the CCSL will contribute to HOJO may vary depending on the findings of these reports. The CCSL can expect a report from HOJO in December and recommendations for funding will be made at that time.

Committee on Communication & Awareness Raising of the Student Services Sector

Ms. Sheahan explained that this committee works to ensure that promotional material will put an emphasis on engaging those students who are most in need of the services, rather than simply displaying information about the service being provided. The committee strives to come up with innovative and cost effective ways of communicating information, such as the Healthy Living Guide found on promotional memory sticks that have been distributed.

6.2 Student Services/Recreation & Athletics Year-End Financial Statements

Student Services

Mr. Côté presented the Student Services Year-End Statement to the Council. He explained that the statement reflected a zero balance, however \$609,902, although recorded as an expense, is available to be spent in Student Services. The positive variance is attributable to vacant positions over the course of the 2006-2009 budget period. Mr. Côté suggested

to the Council that no decisions be made on how these funds will be distributed until after mid-January 2009 when students can no longer deregister and the true sources of revenue will be more clear.

Recreation & Athletics

Ms. Sheahan presented the Recreation & Athletics Year-End Statement to the Council. She noted that the department would like to capitalize on the opportunity to obtain and secure sponsorship revenues, event sales and registration. She noted that the total amount of revenue earned did not capture services received in kind. For example, in return for exposure of their product, suppliers provided training gear to the University without charge. An emphasis was put on the performance of Le Gym at the Sir George Williams Campus and how it greatly surpassed anticipated participation levels.

Mr. Chivi inquired whether or not every department requests from the CCSL how much funding they wish to receive. Mr. Côté explained that in the past the budget has been prepared for the entire Student Services, then the Council would deliberate until the priorities for spending were agreed upon. The CCSL would present their recommendations to the Board of Governors, who in turn would decide if the budget being presented was acceptable. Mr. Côté noted that the budget would be discussed at the October CCSL meeting.

6.3 International Student Bursary Launch

Ms. Stanbra announced the launch of the new bursary program for international students and noted that applications could be found online, with an application deadline of October 31st, 2008. Advertising has been put in student newspapers and targeted emails have been sent to inform international students about the program. Ms. Dicaire asked for clarification as to what “good academic standing” is, which is a criterion for applicants. Ms. Stanbra confirmed that a student with a 2.0 grade point average would be considered in good academic standing. Ms. Stanbra acknowledged that the bursary program was a result of the 10% increase to international student fees.

7. STUDENT LIFE ISSUES

7.1 Policy on the Display of Posters

A discussion ensued on the progress of replacing the poster boards that had been removed last spring. Ms. Lussier confirmed that discussions were still taking place with Facilities Management, however two concerns were arising: the supplier of the previous boards no longer exists; there was a concern of ensuring that the replacement boards were aesthetically a match with the location. Ms. Lussier noted that the Purchasing department was still looking for suitable replacement boards. Ms. Kashfi stated that the CSU continues to receive complaints from students because they feel that have lost more of the limited space available to advertise for student events, etc. Mr. Chivi suggested that in the future there be replacement boards ready to be put up prior to removing the old ones. He also requested a proposed timeline for the poster board issue to be resolved. Ms. Lussier assured the Council that a resolution was in progress and that more information would be provided at the next CCSL meeting.

7.2 Accuracy of Information

A conversation followed about the accuracy of information being put into the student handbook. Ms. Hedrich raised the concern that students were being hit with unexpected fees attributable to inaccurate information found in the handbook. Ms. Kashfi noted that this issue had already been brought to the CSU’s attention and that the issue had been resolved. Mr. Chivi proposed that one document containing all vital information from the various Student Services departments be given to the editor of the handbook, rather than having to collect the information from various people. The Council agreed that this would help to minimize the number of errors.

8. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

9. NEXT MEETING & PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM

The next meeting is schedule for October 24, 2008, H-769 10am

The proposed agenda item for the next meeting is to begin the budget review process.

10. TERMINATION OF MEETING

Ms. Kashfi motioned to terminate the meeting. Ms. Drew seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.